

Minutes Monthly Public Health QA Conference Call
April 6, 2010

Participants: Cindy Carter (CT), Hiedi Dillenbeck (NY), Ed Luce (VT), Peggy DiNatale (MA), Linda Han, MD (MA), Dina Caloggero (MA), Sandra Smole, Ph.D. (MA)

Minutes by: Peggy DiNatale (MA)

Review results from the survey tool / discussion / consensus

- 1. Frequency of calls:** Responses were varied and there was no obvious consensus of this question. Concern was expressed that if we decrease the frequency it could lead to more cancellations and could jeopardize the scheduling of calls.

Consensus: The calls will be scheduled monthly and as in the past, if we don't have a topic or most labs are unable to attend a call, we can cancel that month.

- 2. Expand size of group on calls:** Three surveys indicated a wish to expand the number of states on the call. Four surveys did not want to expand the number of states on the call. Five surveys indicated that the number of states included may vary based on the topic – some topics would benefit from input from the participation of additional states. The CLIA surveyors from Region II will coordinate calls for NY with states that have similar test volumes.

Consensus: If discussion of topic or presentation of information by a SME would be better served by including additional states, other states will be invited to call in to the conference call.

- 3. Format of the calls:** Responses included having professional facilitator for the calls and to have SME's manage the calls. Responses also included the suggestion of establishing a mechanism to share documents among the call participants and seeking assistance from APHL. There was discussion that the cost of a professional facilitator for the calls may be difficult to arrange and to fund. Ed Luce, from Vermont, will speak with Charlie Reynolds (Region I CLIA Surveyor) to see if there may be funds available or other options available to use these calls as a training session and to attract SME's for certain topics.

Consensus: Ed Luce will speak with Charlie about finding SME speakers and possible funding options for training during some calls, when training is appropriate. Peggy DiNatale will follow up on the idea of identifying a "shared" folder with APHL either through the QA ListServ or the OnLine Resource Center (ORC). The group felt that we would like to have a folder that would be specific for our group and not available to everyone on the ListServ. Some documents may be relevant for the wider ListServ and some may be more relevant to the New England states and New York.

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4. Topics for future calls:

Follow up calls: responses were mixed for the calls that were listed on the survey

- Converting lab space between BSL 2 and BSL 3
- Select agent inspections
- LRN PT testing for BT and CT
- Risk assessment programs

New ideas submitted on the survey forms:

- LIS requirements for public health
- Specimen labeling
- Multi-analyte QC rules, instrument troubleshooting/maintenance
- Discussion of analytical software
- Pre and post analytical practices
- Diagnostics reporting and management of laboratories
- EP testing and proficiency
- Hospital acquired infections and the PHL role
- Quality improvement topics
- Upcoming CLIA inspections
- Specific details of the QA programs at the various PHLs
- Validation of LRN methods to meet CLIA validation requirements (BT and CT)
- Top five findings of the internal lab audits and what actions were taken in response to the findings
- Continuing (education) programs at the PHLs – what has worked, what hasn't worked
- Amplification methods – frequency of contamination; methods (or practices) to control contamination.
- Specimen processing area in PHLs

New ideas generated during the conference call:

- Instrumentation for molecular testing – extraction platforms (ABI 7500 Fast)
- Instrumentation for molecular testing – LIMS connectivity / networking and IT security
- LIMS:
 - validation of a new LIMS
 - validation of changes to current system / change control
 - interfacing with instrumentation
- CLIA competency assessments – 6 month and 1 year; discuss the six points of emphasis for upcoming surveys
- Electronic reporting of results and the new Interpretive Guidelines for transmission of results and the lab's responsibility
- Best practices from the perspective of the CLIA surveyor

Consensus: We may be able to group a few topics together on one call, for example some of the calls listed as “follow-up” topics. Each topic individually may not require a full conference call and this would be a more efficient use of our time. We agreed to topics for May, June and July. The agenda for each will be developed and sent electronically to all QAO's about a week prior to the call.

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NOTE from Peggy: Please post these topics for all staff so they are able to attend if the topic is pertinent for them.

May 4, 2010 topic: Molecular testing Instrumentation – Extraction platforms

1. ABI 7500 Fast and other platforms in use
2. LIMS connectivity

June 1, 2010 topic: CLIA competency assessments

1. Six points of emphasis by CLIA
2. Six month competency assessments
3. One year competency assessments

July 6, 2010 topic: Planning conference call

1. Follow up from Ed Luce on discussions with Charlie Reynolds
2. Follow up from Peggy DiNatale on a shared folder for the group
3. Discuss agenda for a LIMS call: validation of new LIMS; validation of changes to current LIMS; instrument interfacing;
4. Outline a schedule of topics and identify SME's when possible